



OFFICIAL PORTRAIT
of
CONGRESSMAN JOSEPH H. RAINEY

For three years Congressman Robert Ney and Congressman Chaka Fattah have worked to bring honor and recognition to Congressman Joseph H. Rainey. It is a distinguished honor to commemorate the legacy of the first African American to serve in the United States House of Representatives with the unveiling of his official portrait.

ABOUT CONGRESSMAN RAINEY

Born into slavery on June 21, 1832 in Georgetown, South Carolina., Joseph H. Rainey was freed when his father purchased his family's freedom. The Confederacy drafted Rainey during the Civil War, but he escaped to Bermuda where slavery was banned. After the war, Rainey moved back to Georgetown and became a member of the South Carolina Republican Party executive committee. A representative to the 1868 South Carolina Constitutional Convention, he was elected to the state senate in 1870. Rainey resigned from the State senate in 1870 after being elected to the forty-first U.S. Congress. He served in the House of Representatives until March of 1879, being reelected four times. Having dedicated himself to passing civil rights legislation, he served as a member on the committees of Freedmen's Affairs and Indian Affairs. Upon his retirement from public service, Congressman Rainey was involved in banking and brokerage in Washington, D.C. before returning to Georgetown, South Carolina where he died on August 2, 1887.